

Iowa Crops & Weather



USDA – National Agricultural Statistical Service
Iowa Field Office

210 Walnut, Room 833 • Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2195
515-284-4340 • 1-800-772-0825 • FAX 515-284-4342 • nass-ia@nass.usda.gov
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WARM AND DAMP DECEMBER

Above average temperatures and rainfall resulted in muddy conditions in feedlots and pastures while at the same time allowed corn fields to remain open for grazing. Some producers reported that the warm weather caused illness in new feeder calves. Rains have restocked soil moisture and tiles have been running in some areas of the state. Producers would like to see a good frost sometime soon.

At the end of December, the average depth of **snow cover** across Iowa was 0 inches, compared to 2 inches at the same time last year. The average depth of **frost penetration** for the state was 2 inches, compared to last year's 4 inches. **Soil moisture availability** was rated 2 percent very short, 13 percent short, 77 percent adequate, and 8 percent surplus. **Movement of grain** for the state was 20 percent none, 39 percent light, 38 percent moderate, and 3 percent heavy.

Availability of hay and roughage supplies was 6 percent short, 83 percent adequate, and 11 percent surplus. **Quality of hay and roughage supplies** was 4 percent poor, 34 percent fair, and 62 percent good. **Utilization of stubble fields for grazing** rated 17 percent none, 23 percent limited, 41 percent moderate, and 19 percent extensive.

Hog and pig losses in December were slightly below last year's state averages at 30 percent below average, 67 percent average, and 3 percent above average. **Cattle and calf losses** were also slightly below last year's state averages at 36 percent below average, 62 percent average, and 2 percent above average.

IOWA PRELIMINARY WEATHER SUMMARY Provided by State Climatologist Harry Hillaker

General Summary. Temperatures averaged 31.6° or 9.0° above normal while precipitation totaled 2.10 inches or 0.87 inches more than normal. This ranks as the 13th warmest and 12th wettest December among 134 years of state records. A warmer December has not been recorded since 1965 and a wetter one since 1984.

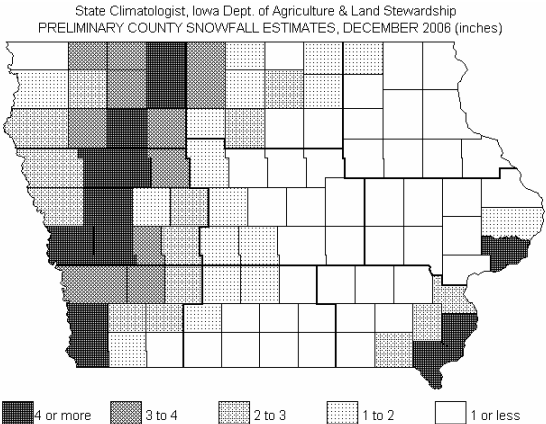
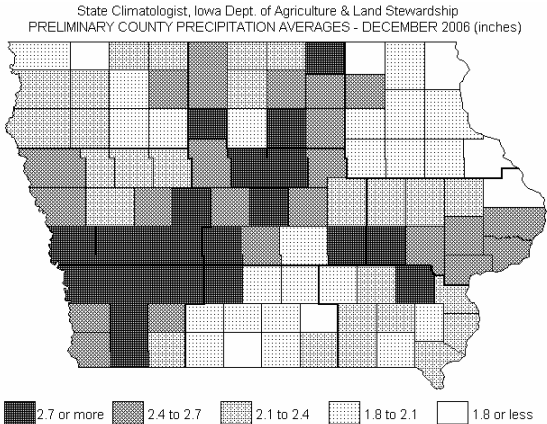
Temperatures. The month began with colder than normal weather for the first 8 days of the month. Actual temperatures fell as low as -5° at Sanborn on the morning of the 7th while wind chill readings

dipped to -24° at Mason City. Temperatures edged back above normal on the 9th and were well above normal for the remainder of the month. Temperatures averaged more than 20° above normal on the 14th, 16th, 28th, 29th and 30th. Fairfield reported the highest temperature of the month with a 63° reading on the afternoon of the 16th. There were no subzero temperatures after the 8th, in fact no readings even in the single digits after that point. The first 8 days of the month averaged 7.7° below normal while the last 23 days averaged 14.8° above normal.

Heating Degree Days Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 27% less than last December and 22% less than normal. So far this heating season (since July 1) heating requirements are running 5% less than last year at this time and 11% less than normal.

Precipitation. The month began and ended with snowfall but featured practically none in between. Far southeast Iowa caught the northwest edge of a massive snowstorm on the 1st with 9 to 12 inches reported in the Keokuk area. Other than a light dusting in a few areas on the 6th there was no other measurable snow until the 31st when snow accumulated across the northwest one-half of the state. Galva (Ida County) reported the most snow during this last event with 6 inches. However, there was plentiful moisture in the state coming in the form of rain. Showers and thunderstorms brought light to moderate rain on the night of the 11th (and even some large hail). However, a pair of storm systems on the 20th-22nd and 29th-31st brought unseasonably heavy rainfall to much of Iowa. The first of these storms (the one that paralyzed the Denver Airport with snow) brought a statewide average rainfall of 1.22 inches with Ladora (Iowa County) recording 2.85 inches. The second event brought an average of 1.08 inches of precipitation with the most at Little Sioux (Harrison Co.) where 1.99 inches fell. The mild weather of mid and late December thawed soils over much of Iowa, allowing much of the late month precipitation to soak into the ground and replenish soil moisture.

A new snowfall record? The preliminary official statewide average snowfall for the month of December 2006 is currently estimated at 0.4 inches. This ties the record low December snowfall totals of 0.4 inches set previously in 1979 and 2002. However, actual statewide average snowfall is estimated to be 1.5 inches. Why the discrepancy? There are 173 'official' snowfall reporting points in Iowa. With the exception of a handful of reporting points in major cities with paid weather observers each station measures snowfall only one time per day. Most of these once daily measurements (148 to be specific) are made during the morning, typically about 7 a.m. Snow or rain falling after 7 a.m. at these sites are recorded the next morning. Most of the snow falling on December 31st came after 7 a.m. (but before midnight). However, these snowfall amounts will officially go into the record books for January 1, 2007. Historically, until the late 1940's, virtually all of the once daily measurements were made during the evening hours, thus more closely mimicking the midnight-to-midnight calendar day. The trend has been increasingly toward morning observations since the late 1940's. Most of the time this practice causes no major statistical problems, the rain or snow does get counted; however, the timing of the December 31 storm results in most of the snow being officially recorded in a different month and year from when it actually fell. The accompanying precipitation and snowfall maps, however, reflect the 'real' storm totals.



Snow Cover and Frost Penetration for the Month of December

Item	Districts									State	Last Month	Last Year
	NW	NC	NE	WC	C	EC	SW	SC	SE			
	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>
Snow cover	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Frost penetration	4	5	2	2	2	0	1	1	0	2	2	0

December Weather Summary For Iowa Agricultural Statistics Service Prepared by AWIS, Inc.											
STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				PRECIPITATION			HDD TOT	HDD DFN	DAYS OF 32 COLD	DAYS OF 28 COLD
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS				
	North West District										
Estherville	54	-2	29	12	1.73	1.00	6	1,107	-361	29	21
Sioux Center	53	-3	30	11	2.04	1.20	7	1,063	-329	27	21
Spencer	56	-1	29	11	0.78	0.07	5	1,099	-343	27	20
Spirit Lake	54	-2	29	12	1.96	1.07	7	1,111	-109	30	24
North Central District											
Britt	51	-3	28	9	1.94	0.58	6	1,146	-268	28	23
Humboldt	51	-1	29	9	2.04	1.03	5	1,113	-285	28	25
Mason City	51	-1	29	12	1.90	0.69	6	1,095	-351	24	20
Osage	50	-1	28	9	2.29	1.04	5	1,138	-246	27	25
North East District											
Decorah	51	1	31	11	2.09	0.88	5	1,055	-317	25	20
Dubuque	53	2	31	11	1.37	-0.59	4	1,033	-314	21	15
Elkader	55	0	30	9	1.60	0.20	4	1,085	-98	27	23
Fayette	52	1	29	9	1.85	0.44	6	1,105	-273	27	20
Waterloo	54	2	32	12	1.54	0.24	5	1,028	-358	22	18
West Central District											
Carroll	58	0	31	10	1.71	0.75	6	1,057	-301	28	24
Castana	56	-1	30	8	2.21	1.38	5	1,072	-321	28	23
Guthrie Center	56	1	31	9	2.70	1.42	5	1,045	-269	28	25
Harlan	56	0	31	8	2.43	1.42	5	1,046	-324	28	23
Jefferson	59	1	32	11	2.46	1.50	6	1,028	-330	27	23
Logan	59	2	31	9	2.31	1.24	6	1,056	-257	27	26
Rockwell City	54	-1	29	8	1.70	0.77	4	1,097	-239	28	25
Sac City	55	-1	30	10	1.79	0.65	4	1,091	-299	28	27
Sioux City	58	2	31	10	2.45	1.67	7	1,035	-304	25	20
Central District											
Boone	57	1	31	9	2.25	0.91	6	1,062	-282	27	23
Des Moines	60	5	36	12	1.98	0.66	5	903	-357	19	13
Grundy Center	54	1	30	11	2.28	0.99	5	1,073	-319	27	21
Marshalltown	55	2	32	11	1.80	0.51	6	1,013	-320	22	17
Newton	58	1	31	9	1.38	0.25	6	1,036	-257	26	21
Perry	57	1	32	10	2.61	1.55	5	1,030	-295	25	23
Toledo	55	1	30	9	2.12	0.87	5	1,073	-265	26	22
East Central District											
Cedar Rapids	58	-1	32	10	2.21	0.62	4	1,023	-287	22	17
Davenport	57	2	33	8	2.78	0.86	7	989	-231	21	16
Iowa City	58	3	33	8	2.59	1.03	6	979	-233	21	17
Lowden	58	2	30	8	2.64	0.53	5	1,074	-226	26	23
Maquoketa	55	4	30	7	1.94	0.14	4	1,084	-221	26	23
Muscatine	61	7	34	9	2.82	0.85	7	952	-438	22	16
South West District											
Atlanta	57	1	33	12	2.83	1.74	8	977	-344	24	21
Clarinda	58	3	32	8	2.94	1.76	5	1,016	-236	26	23
Glenwood	60	3	32	9	2.25	1.07	5	1,001	-233	27	23
Red Oak	59	4	33	9	2.80	1.59	5	977	-246	25	23
Sidney	59	4	34	9	2.30	1.14	6	963	-262	26	19
South Central District											
Allerton	59	3	33	9	2.12	0.81	6	974	-506	24	20
Beaconsfield	59	2	33	9	2.00	0.89	4	990	-262	26	21
Chariton	60	2	33	10	1.67	0.31	4	982	-283	22	21
Indianola	61	3	33	10	2.05	0.67	4	977	-286	24	22
Leon	61	3	34	10	1.42	0.06	4	964	-285	22	21
South East District											
Bloomfield	62	4	34	8	1.94	0.38	3	956	-211	21	19
Burlington	60	2	35	9	1.66	-0.32	7	914	-272	16	14
Ottumwa	62	4	35	10	2.07	0.64	6	921	-294	18	15
Washington	59	3	32	6	3.02	1.33	5	1,001	-369	23	21

Precipitation (rain, melted snow or ice) in inches. Precipitation Days = Days with precipitation of 0.01 inch or more. Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit. Copyright 2007: AWIS, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

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